**Ch 6, User documentation, p 226-**

**Onscreen user documentation**

1. What is the nature of onscreen user documentation?

* Onscreen user documentation is information to provide guidance to users, and is designed to be viewed on the screen of a computer or other electronic device.

1. List the 3 functions of onscreen user documentation?

* A user may refer to onscreen user documentation for instructions on accessing and using features of new programs or devices, or for instructions on using product features with which they are unfamiliar
* A user in a workplace may refer to in-house onscreen user documentation for information on company procedures and policies for their information system
* If a problem occurs while using a product, the user may refer to a help file or an onscreen instruction manual to find a solution

**Types of onscreen user documentation:**

1. User guides and instruction manuals
   1. What are the purpose of these guides?
   * User guides and instruction manuals are standard guides provided free on CD or DVD with a commercially purchased software package or hardware device. The purpose of these guides is to inform and instruct the user about the characteristics, capabilities and functions or the hardware or software.
   1. What are the two popular formats for onscreen user guides? Why?
   * The two popular formats for onscreen user guides and instruction manuals are portable document format (PDF) and hypertext (browser-based). This is because they can both be accessed on various platforms or operating systems.
   1. What is a third party user guide?
   * A third party company means a different organisation from the original manufacturer of a product. The ‘third party’ may provide support or add-ons for a product, which will sell for profit.

Describe the characteristics of the following types of onscreen user documentation.

1. Quick start guides

* Onscreen quick start guides are provided with an application or device for first-time or inexperienced users of the product.

1. In-house user documentation

* In-house user documentation are user guides and instruction manuals that enable employees or clients of the organisation to use in an information system.

1. Read me files

* Read me files are provided by the manufacturer with hardware and software products. They contain important information for users, such as system requirements, configuration settings for the product, troubleshooting strategies, web support address and details on how to access product updates.

1. Tutorials

* A tutorial consists of step-by-step instructions for using the features and functions of a software program on hardware devices.

1. Help files

* Help files provide searchable information about the features and functions of a software application or a device.

1. Web support

* Web support will have sections such as frequency asked questions (FAQs), knowledge base (a database of information topics about the product), troubleshooting and how to upgrade the product.

1. Tool tips & hint boxes

* Tool tips and hint boxes are also forms of onscreen user documentation, as they provide context-sensitive help to support the user in understanding and using a software product.